

THE
REFORMED
THEOLOGICAL
REVIEW



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THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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Sacra Scriptura

Observations on Augustine's doctrine of Inspiration

The quest for the authority of Holy Scripture has become one of the foremost problems for all Christendom, for Catholics and Protestants, for the churches in countries with an old Christian tradition as well as for the younger churches on the mission fields throughout the world. This fact indicates the presence of a deep crisis within Christianity itself. It is a universally accepted doctrine of all churches, with the exception of some modern Christian bodies which have more or less severed their bond with historic Christianity, that Holy Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is, therefore, the infallible Word of God in writing. This doctrine is either silently presupposed or expressly testified to in the great creeds and confessions of Christendom from the Nicene Creed ("... Who spoke by the prophets") to the confessions of the 16th century and to the *Constitutio de Fide Catholica* of the Vatican. The deep difference that exists between Catholicism, Eastern and Western, on the one hand, and the Churches of the Reformation on the other, concerning the "*sola scriptura*" and the authoritative teaching office of the Church, must not lead to the widespread misunderstanding that the churches of the Catholic tradition did not accept the dogmatic authority of the Scriptures for the Church. Rome expressly declares in the Constitution on the Catholic Faith that she accepts the books of the Bible as "sacred and canonical," not because they have been approved by the authority of the Church, or because they *contain* the revelation without error, "but rather because these books, written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have God as

their author and have as such been *given to the Church*."⁽¹⁾ During the last 250 years, it is true, the impact of modern historical research seemed often to endanger or even to destroy the old view, founded upon the biblical statements themselves, of the Bible as being in its entirety—from cover to cover, so to speak—the inspired and infallible Word of God. In our days, however, the fight between "Fundamentalism" and "Modernism" is becoming more and more obsolete because the tacit *philosophical* presuppositions of either view have proved untenable. A "Bible Movement" is proceeding throughout Christendom, the deeper reason for which is the fact that all churches are confronted with the task of finding a new *theological* understanding of the written Word of God. The great encyclicals on the Bible by the modern popes, such as *De sacrorum Bibliorum studiis* of 1943 (Denziger 2293f.), or the new Latin translation of the psalms reveal something of the amazing work which is being done in this direction by Rome. The fresh approach to a theological understanding of the Bible on the part of Anglican and Reformed scholars, Karl Barth's Dogmatics and the rediscovery of Luther's christological understanding of the Bible—all this shows that the churches are beginning to realise their precarious situation, as it became manifest at Evanston and as it is keenly felt on the mission fields. How can the churches meet the challenge presented by the revival of the great religions of Asia and by the powerful political substitutes for religion in our age, unless they know what they are saying when they claim that the Bible is God's Word?

The following pages are not meant to be more than the title intimates. They should help to elucidate the problem of Holy Scripture by furnishing some observations on the doctrine of that Church Father who through his authority has determined the thoughts of all Western Christendom on the inspiration and inerrancy of Holy Writ. These pages were first published in German in a symposium for Dr. Franz Dornseiff, Professor of Classics at the University of Greifswald (*Festschrift Franz Dornseiff zum 65. Geburtstag*, 1953, pp. 262-273). They are printed here by kind permission of the publisher (VEB Bibliographisches Institut Leipzig) in a translation for which the author is deeply indebted to Mr. R. F. Hosking, B.A., Tutor at Ridley College, Melbourne.

(1) Denziger 1787: 'sed propterea, quod Spiritu Sancto inspirante conscripti Deum habent auctorem, atque ut tales ipsi Ecclesiae traditi sunt.'

I.

The view of Scripture inspired by the Spirit of God, as the source and record of revelation, is not, as we know, simply a creation of Christianity. Jesus and the Apostles took it over from Judaism together with the Old Testament as an obvious truth not requiring any proof. This is shown by the way in which the Old Testament is quoted as an authority. An express doctrine of the *Theopneustia* of the Scriptures, with reference to the prophetic message of the Old Testament, is found in 2 Tim. 3:16, and, on the border of the canon, 2 Peter 1, 19ff. On the way in which this inspiration is to be understood the New Testament makes no direct statement. So it came about that when the early Christian theology of the Apologists felt it necessary to make statements on the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, it was, to begin with, content to take over Jewish theories as they had developed in the Aramaic and Greek synagogues, partly through the influx of oriental-hellenistic concepts.⁽²⁾ Not all Judaism's notions of the origin of Holy Scripture were taken over. For example, the rabbinic theory of the pre-existence of the Torah, which has parallels in the various conceptions of a book or books in heaven, never took on Christian form, whilst it re-appeared in the Islamic doctrine of the Koran. But it is different with the Jewish ideas of the inspiration of the books of the Old Testament following the Pentateuch. As an example of Jewish teaching on inspiration, the description of Ezra's copying of the lost holy Scriptures in the Ezra Apocalypse (2, Vulg. 4, Esdras 14) may be quoted. God, as an answer to the prayer, "Send the Holy Spirit into me"⁽³⁾ (v. 22) lights "a lamp of understanding"⁽⁴⁾ (v. 25) in Ezra's heart for the period of copying, forty days. The process of inspiration is itself described thus: "my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory: and my mouth was opened, and shut no more"⁽⁵⁾ (v. 40f., R.V.). Endowed with this divine understanding, wisdom, and strength of memory, in forty days Ezra

(2) Material for the rabbinic doctrine of inspiration has been collected with remarkable completeness by Paul Billerbeck in H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum NT aus Talmud und Midrash*, Vol. IV, pp. 415-451, Excursus 16: "Der Kanon des AT und seine Inspiration." The value of this great work for the history of religion, is still to be extracted.

(3) 'Inmitte in me spiritum sanctum.' (Vulg.).

(4) 'lucerna intellectus.'

(5) 'Cor meum cruciabatur intellectu, et in pectus meum increscerebat sapientia. Nam spiritus meus conservabatur memoria, et apertum est os meum et non est clausum amplius.'

dictates to his scribes the 24 books of the Old Testament, and in addition 70 more apocalyptic writings which were to be kept secret. Philo understands inspiration as a state of ecstatic enthusiasm which can only fall to the lot of the sage. "The prophecy of Holy Scripture bears witness to every sage. Yet a prophet preaches nothing of his own, but thoughts which come outside of himself and with which someone else inspires him. It is not given to a fool to become an interpreter of God, so that in point of fact no person morally bad does come into a state of ecstasy, for that befits the sage alone, for he alone is a sounding instrument of God, invisibly played and struck by Him."⁽⁶⁾ Thus does H. Leisegang translate the well-known passage *Quis rerum divinarum heres* (259 Mangey 510) and rightly adds to it, "with these words Philo demonstrates his complete misunderstanding of Old Testament prophecy," which indeed knows of no nexus between the Holy Spirit and the prophetic message with a particular degree of education. For the first time we find here, within Alexandrian Judaism, the disastrous apposition of revelation and philosophy, of prophecy and ecstatic enthusiasm which soon was taken over uncritically by the Christian Apologists. It is not to be wondered that in a movement such as the Montanist, in which heathen ecstasy found its way into the Church, there should become possible such an understanding of inspiration as is conceived in the utterance of the Paraclete in Montanus: "Behold, man is like a lyre and I come rushing down like a plectrum" (Epiph. *Panarion haer.* 48:4). But one is surprised that over such misunderstanding of prophecy the healthy reaction exhibited in the title of Miltiades' work, "That a prophet ought not to speak while in a state of ecstasy" (cf. Eusebius, h.e. V, 16f.) did not triumph. The contemporary Apologists did not accept this approach. Rather did they take over with startling assurance from paganism and the Jewish literature, the old picture of the lyre and the plectrum, and applied it to the biblical authors. Thus Athenagoras (*Legatio pro Christianis* 9) suggests that Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the other prophets, "being removed from their own mind (in the state of ecstasy),

(6) *Der Heilige Geist*, (Vol. I, I. p. 146); 'Jedem Weisen bezeugt die Heilige Schrift Prophetie. Ein Prophet aber verkündet nichts Eigenes, sondern ihm fremde Gedanken, die ein anderer ihm eingibt. Einem Toren ist es nicht verstattet, ein Dolmetscher Gottes zu werden, so dass tatsaechlich kein sittlich Schlechter in Enthusiasmus geraet, allein dem Weisen ziemt sich das, da ja auch er allein ein klingendes Instrument Gottes ist, unsichtbar gespielt und angeschlagen von ihm.'

would have uttered under the influence of the Holy Spirit that with which they had been inspired, the Spirit using them like a flautist playing a flute."⁽⁷⁾ In Chapter 7 the Apologist proves by this the necessity of recognising such revelations; for it would be "absurd to withdraw from faithful surrender to the divine Spirit that touches the prophet's mouth like a musical instrument, and turn to human opinions." Even pseudo-Justin, in *Cohortatio ad Graecos* 8 (Migne SG 6,256) makes use of the same illustration in order to render inspiration intelligible: the divine Pneuma descends from heaven and uses the holy person as an instrument (*organan*) like the plectrum which causes a zither or lyre to sound. Such illustrations are directed, if need be, to the "prophets" and "sibyls" of ancient paganism—one thinks of the classic description of the Sibyl of Cumae in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*—the result is that the biblical prophets are, as a matter of fact, placed on a par with the heathen prophetesses. Judaism led the way with its sibylline literature. The church followed on from here since Christian authors adapted the Jewish sibylline oracles. The logical conclusion of this mantic conception of inspiration is reached by pseudo-Justin (*Cohortatio ad Graecos* 37) and Theophilus (*ad Autolycum* 11, 9) when they see revelation in the prophets and revelation in the sibyls to be in "fine harmony with each other" (Theophilus *ad. loc.*). What was not noticed by those time-honoured theologians of the 2nd century was that this interpretation of inspiration was directed neither to Old Testament prophecy, which was not restricted to states of ecstasy, nor to what the New Testament, with great sobriety, says or implies of its origin (cf. Luke 1, 1, John 21, 24, the Pauline epistles). Their blindness to the originality and reality of the biblical Word largely explains itself by their being Apologists who had to explain in discussion with alien religions a doctrine of the Scripture and its inspiration, as the Jewish apologists before them had already done in a similar situation. But what proves the downfall of every apologist is that it is not simply that the questions of the opponent are being accepted unthinkingly, but that in the framing of the questions part of the answer is effectively taken over from him. So it becomes clear that the early Christian doctrine of

(7) Cf. the Commentary of J. Geffcken, *Zwei Griechische Apologeten* (1907) pp. 177 and 179 f. Here he traces back the picture of the prophet's mouth as the 'organon' of God to the above quoted passage in Philo, *quis rer. div. h. Mangey* I.510.

the inspiration of the Scripture as it was developed first of all by the Apologists is for the main part nothing else than a heathen theory taken over via the Synagogue, and which was only superficially given Christian appearance. It was a disaster that later theology, especially in Alexandria, took over this doctrine and developed it instead of contenting itself with the plain teaching of Justin (e.g., *Dial. cum Tryph.* 58, 4) and Irenaeus (e.g., *adv. haer.* 11, 28, 2), according to which Scripture is inspired by the Logos or the Holy Spirit and is therefore true, only these Fathers did not attempt to explain the "how" of inspiration.

II.

Only against the background of the old apologetics can Augustine's doctrine of inspiration be understood. It is no accident that the most important thing that he, the last great Apologist of the early Church, said about the Holy Scripture and its inspiration is extant in two works of apologetics: in that huge work *De Civitate Dei*, and in *De consensu evangelistarum*, which, though compared with the former is slight and paltry, yet even to-day is an effective attempt at a harmony of the Gospels. From these works emerge the phantoms of the great heathen critics of the Christian religion and its claim to revelation—men such as Celsus, Porphyry and Julian. The work on the evangelists is especially directed toward the criticism of Porphyry. How far Augustine is able to go into the province of his opponent is shown by the fact that he, too, like his predecessors, groups the prophets of the Bible and the sibyls together.⁽⁸⁾ Hence he tries to demonstrate the existence of the true God to the pagan by comparing the predictions of the prophets and the sibyls: "If they give the name of god to that being under whose inspiration the Sibyl sung of the fates of the Romans, how is not He (to be called) God, who, in accordance with the announcement aforesome given, has shown us how the Romans and all nations are coming to believe in Himself through the Gospel of Christ as the one God, and to demolish all the images of their fathers? Finally, if they designate those as gods who have never dared through their prophets to

(8) "Augustine should be regarded as the author of 'Teste David cum Sibylla,'" says Heinrich Scholz in *Glaube und Unglaube in der Weltgeschichte. Ein Kommentar zu Augustins De Civitate Dei.* (1911) p. 95, note 3. Yet he himself refers to the Sibyl of Cumae in the Shepherd of Hermas (*vis I, I, 3*); neither should the older apologetics be overlooked. For all that, Augustine, together with Virgil's 4th Eclogue, did actually prove a basis for the mediaeval respect for the Sibyls.

say anything against this God, how is not He (to be designated) God, who not only commanded by the mouth of His prophets the destruction of their images, but who also predicted that among all the Gentiles they would be destroyed by those who should be enjoined to abandon their idols and to worship Him alone, and who, on receiving these injunctions, should be His servants. Or let them aver, if they are able, that some Sibyl of theirs, or any one whatever among their own prophets, announced long ago that it would come to pass that the God of the Hebrews, the God of Israel, would be worshipped by all nations"⁽⁹⁾ ("Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers," vol. VI, p. 88). While here prophets and sibyls are still contrasted, the Erythraean or Cumaean sibyl, on account of the clearness of her prediction, is regarded as belonging to the *Civitatis Dei*. For this sibyl, who had foretold Jesus Christ as Saviour, in her whole poem not only has nothing "that can relate to the worship of the false or feigned gods, but rather speaks against them and their worshippers in such a way that we might even think she ought to be reckoned among those who belong to the city of God"⁽¹⁰⁾ (*Ibid*, vol. II, p. 373). Of course even if Augustine in other respects sharply distinguishes between the prophetic revelation in Scripture and the chancy or absurd predictions of heathen seers and sibyls, the single exception of the Cumaean sibyl shows that there can be true prophecy even outside the Bible. The same process of inspiration that occurred in the realms of biblical prophecy can occur and has occurred even outside the biblical revelation. That is the inference from the Apologists' concept of inspiration. There can be a state of ecstasy brought about by God both within and without the biblical sphere. Prediction is still prediction whether it is proclaimed by prophet or sibyl. It is the foretelling of future events whose occurrence or non-occurrence can be ascertained from the events of history. What must remain obscure with this way of

(9) **De consenu evang.** (I, 19f; CSEL 43, 26, Iff): 'Si deum dicunt, quo impleta Sibylla fata cecinit Romanorum, quomodo non est Deus, qui et Romanos et omnes nationes in se unum Deum per Christi evangelium credituras et omnia patrum suorum simulacra eversuras, sicut praenuntiavit, exhibuit? Postremo, si illos deos dicunt, qui numquam ausi sunt per vates suos contra istum Deum aliquid dicere, quomodo non est Deus, qui per vates suos istorum simulacra non solum everti iussit, verum etiam in omnibus gentibus eversuri praedixit ab eis, qui illis desertis se unum Deum colere iuberentur et iussi famularentur? Aut legant, si possunt, vel aliquam Sibyllarum vel quemlibet aliorum vatum suorum praedixisse hoc futurum, ut Deus Hebraeorum, Deus Israel ab omnibus gentibus coleretur.'

(10) **De civ. Dei XVIII, 23:** 'quod ad deorum falsorum sive factorum cultum pertineat, quin immo ita etiam contra eos et contra cultores eorum loquitur, ut in eorum numero deputanda videatur, qui pertinent ad civitatem Dei.'

thinking is that prophecy in the meaning of the Bible is something more than the foretelling of future events, and that it is the content of the word alone and not the form of its origin that makes this word Prophecy the pure Word of God.

There are two ideas that Augustine took over from the late hellenistic and apologetic doctrine of inspiration and which he applied to the biblical word: the view that the author of a book of the Bible was, as an inspired person, only the *instrument* of the Godhead (whether speaking or dictating), and the understanding of inspiration as a *suggestio* of thoughts, words and phrases. So the evangelists' activity as writer of the tidings of Christ is to be understood as the writing down of what Christ, the Head, dictates to the evangelists, as His limbs, or more exactly His hands: "When those disciples have written matters which He declared and spake to them, it ought not by any means to be said that He had written nothing Himself; since the truth is, that His *members* have accomplished only what they became acquainted with by the repeated statements of the *Head* (literally: through the dictation of the *Head*). For all that He was minded to give for our perusal on the subject of His own doings and sayings, He commanded by those disciples, whom He thus used as if they were *His own hands*"⁽¹¹⁾ (*Ibid.* vol. VI, p. 101). If the idea of the writer as an instrument—as in the illustration of the lyre and flute in the older Apologists, or in the picture, found in Gregory the Great,⁽¹²⁾ of the writer being the *calamus* (pen) of the Holy Spirit—is emphasised so strongly it would seem that there could no longer be any talk of the biblical author's personal contribution. However, this personal contribution does not seem fully to have been effaced where the activity of the divine Spirit is understood not as *dictare* but as *suggerere*. In this way Augustine explains the differences in the gospel accounts with regard to the sequence of events, "that each of the evangelists believed it to have been his duty to relate what he had to relate in that order

(11) *De consensu evang.* 1, 35, 54; CSEL 43, 60, 17 ff: 'Cum illi scripserunt, quae ille ostendit et dixit, nequaquam dicendum est quod ipse non scripserit, quandoquidem membra eius id operati sunt, quod dictante capite cognoverunt. Quidquid enim ille de suis factis et dictis nos legere voluit, hoc scribendum illis tamquam suis manibus imperavit.'

(12) *Moralia Praef.* c. I n. 2 (Migne SL 75, 571): 'Si magni cuiusdam viri susceptis epistulis legeremus verba, sed quo calamo fuissent scripta quaereremus, ridiculum profecto esset epistularum auctorem scire sensumque cognoscere, sed quali calamo earum verba impressa fuerint indagare. Cum ergo rem cognoscimus, eiusque rei Spiritum Sanctum auctorem tenemus, quia scriptorem quaerimus, quid aliud agimus, nisi legentes litteras de calamo percontamur.'

in which it had pleased God to *suggest to his recollection* the matters in which he was engaged in recording. At least this might hold good in the case of those incidents with regard to which the question of order, whether it were this or that, detracted nothing from evangelical authority and truth"⁽¹³⁾ (*Ibid.* vol. VI, p. 127). A memory aided by the Holy Spirit, judgment concerning what is to be related, free in its consciousness even if actually directed from above, this and no more remains of human authorship. As slight as this seems to be at first sight, how great is it in comparison with the theory that in inspiration the human mind is a mere mechanical tool like a musical instrument or a typewriter.

Augustine's teaching on inspiration is not uniform. It is governed by the tension between *dictare*, which makes man a mere tool, and *suggerere*, which does not exclude human co-operation. In this tension is revealed a contradiction between what the Bible actually is and what it ought to be according to both the heathen and Jewish concept of the inspiration of Scripture. Augustine saw that in Holy Scripture there is such a thing as the human individuality of the biblical authors. He could not get away from the fact that the evangelists give different accounts and that they show differences in ability to remember. His mistake was the same as that of the earlier Apologists. Instead of starting from what the Bible is, and what it says itself about its origin, and building upon this a *Christian* doctrine of *Theopneustia* (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Peter 1, 19ff.), he went on from what the ancients understood by inspiration and inspired writings, and laboriously endeavoured to show that the Bible conforms to these conceptions. At the same time it must have appeared as a great advantage for the Christian apologists to be in a position to strike back at heathen opponents with their own weapons, since they *proved* to them that the Holy Scriptures of the Christians possess all the marks of a perfect book of supernatural origin. But just as soon as this proof lost its credibility, then this weapon was instantly to recoil on the Church itself. It is one of the greatest tragedies of Church history, that Christianity, through the authority of the fathers of the Church, had to drag along through the centuries a theory which is

(13) *De consensu evan.* 11, 21, 51; CSEL 43, 153, lff: 'quod unusquisque evangelistarum eo se ordine credit debuisse narrare, quo voluisse Deus ea ipsa, quae narrabat, eius recordationi suggerere in eis dumtaxat rebus, quarum ordo, sive ille sive ille sit, nihil minuit auctoritati veritatis evangelicae.'

simply the painfully christianised form of a pagan doctrine of inspired writings.

III.

From the earliest times the understanding of the inspiration of Holy Scripture has been connected with the understanding of its inerrancy. Clement of Rome had already called the Holy Scriptures "true [sc. given] by the Holy Spirit" (1 Clem. 45, 2), and the chorus of Western and Eastern Fathers writing on this question witnesses to the belief of early Christendom that the Holy Scripture, as a revelation of the truth of God, was free of error. Hellenistic-Judaism's doctrine of inspiration as depicted most impressively in the legend of the origin of the Septuagint owes its origin to the desire to possess a guarantee of the accuracy and truth of a given text. In the Old Testament a saying was established as God's Word by its content, in Hellenistic Judaism, by the manner of its origin. The prophet proclaims God's Word and demands belief in it: *Haec dixit Dominus!* The Jewish and Christian apologist wanted to prove that a certain message was not of human but divine origin and therefore must be believed by every thinking person. Nothing is more characteristic of Augustine's apologetic comprehension of inspiration than the lack of discrimination with which he accepts from Jewish apologetics, in its late form, the legend of the Septuagint. According to this, the seventy-two translators independently of each other had translated the whole of the Old Testament in such a way that "an agreement in their words so wonderful, stupendous and plainly divine" (14) (*Ibid.* vol. II, p. 386), furnished the proof that *one* spirit, the Spirit of God, had been effective in all. About this legend—it says the opposite to what the older form in the letter of Aristeas recounts, that is to say, that the translators had worked together in one building and "through mutual collation had agreed on one wording" (Aristeas ed. P. Wendland, 301f.)—Augustine let nothing make him waver, not even Jerome, with whom he had conducted a long correspondence concerning the Septuagint, and who states: "I do not know who was the first writer who by his falsehood built those seventy cells at Alexandria in which they, separated from each other, wrote the same words," (15) particularly since Aristeas and Josephus have

(14) *De civ. Dei* XVIII, 42: 'mirabilem et stupendum planeque divinum in eorum verbis . . . consensum.'

(15) *Apol. adv. libros Rufini* 2, 25: 'Nescio quis primus auctor LXX cellulas Alexandriæ mendacio suo exstruxerit, quibus divisi eadem scriptitarint.' (Cf. also *pref.* in *vers. Gen.* and other places quoted in E. Schuerer, *Gesch. des Juedischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* III, 1898, p. 471).

them collating their text as writers working in one hall and not writing as prophets. Yet Augustine insisted on his 72 prophets and sharply criticised Jerome because he translated the Old Testament out of the Hebrew instead of the equally inspired Septuagint.

Yet if inspiration is to be understood in such a way that man is only the tool of the Holy Spirit and that He alone determined content and form, then even in the smallest details the principle that the Bible is free of inaccuracies, mistakes and contradictions must be valid. In his 82nd letter (to Jerome, no. 116 in Jerome's letters), which represents a vast treatise on the doctrine of Holy Scripture, Augustine expounds his fundamental position on this question: "I have learned to yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error." If in these writings he is perplexed by anything which appears to him to contradict the truth, he does not hesitate to suppose "that either the manuscript is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it"⁽¹⁶⁾ (*Ibid.* vol. I, p. 350, Augustines's Letters, no. LXXXII.1, 3). This passage represents many others in which Augustine acknowledges the inerrancy of Scripture as a foregone conclusion.

IV.

It is extremely instructive to observe the painful efforts by which Augustine tries to reconcile the belief in the basic infallibility of the Bible with the actual state of the biblical text. We choose the two most difficult problems that he has to solve in this regard: the relation of the Septuagint and Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and the differences between the Gospels.

That the Septuagint is the inspired Word of God just as much as the Hebrew Bible, Augustine was certain throughout all his life, even though later he abandoned his negative judgment on the Vulgate's being translated from the Hebrew, declaring it useful, and using it himself, e.g., *De doctrina christiana* IV, 15, where he quotes Amos 7, 14f. from the Vulgate and gives his reason for

(16) Ep. 82, 1, 3; CSEL 44, 354, 5 ff: 'Solis eis scripturarum libris qui iam canonici appellantur, didici hunc timorem honoremque deferre, ut nullum eorum auctorem scribendo aliquid errasse firmissime credam . . . vel mendosum esse codicem vel interpretem non adsecutum esse, quod dictum est, vel me minime intellexisse.' Cf *Contra Faustum* XI, 5 (CSEL 25, I, pag. 320: 'Non licet dicere: auctor huius libri non tenuit veritatem, sed: aut codex mendosus est, aut interpres erravit, aut tu non intelligis' etc.); *De Genesi ad litteram* I, 21, 41; Ep. 28 (ad Hieronymum) III, 3. CSEL 34, 1, 107.

choosing that text. The deeper reason for his holding firm to the authority of the Septuagint lies not so much in the legend, the veracity of which he never doubted, but in the esteem which the LXX text enjoyed among the Apostles in the New Testament. So Augustine is confronted with the superhuman task of harmonising the Greek and the Hebrew Old Testament that was open to him in the Vulgate. How he accomplishes this masterpiece of apologetics may be demonstrated by one example. According to the Hebrew text of Jonah 3, 4, the prophet announced the destruction of Nineveh within 40 days, whilst the LXX reads 3 days. That the prophet obviously could not have said both at once Augustine points out in *De Civ. Dei* XVIII, 44 and explains that he himself inclined to the 40 days of the Hebrew text. The much later seventy translators with their divergent statement could have said something different which was yet to the point even if under another figure, and amounted to the same thing, exhorting the readers not to despise either authority but to raise themselves above its historic content to the meaning of it signified by the historic event, and which it attempts to record. The events that took place in Nineveh hint at what the Gentile Church, symbolised by Nineveh, experienced. Jonah was held to be a type of the Saviour, who lay for "three days" in the tomb, and communed with the Apostles for "forty days." "Because that which could be most suitably signified by both numbers, of which one is used by Jonah the prophet, the other by the prophecy of the seventy translators, the one and the self-same Spirit has spoken" ⁽¹⁷⁾ (*Ibid.* vol. II, p. 387). In this instance Augustine was able to solve the problem of harmonisation only by falling back on a meaning to be found deeper than the letter of the text. For him the truth of the Scripture was hidden behind an apparent contradiction. Thus, when in his youth, he devoted himself to the Scriptures, he was at that time unable to understand them: "And behold, I perceive a thing not comprehended by the proud, not disclosed to children, but lowly as you approach, sublime as you advance, and veiled in mysteries" ⁽¹⁸⁾ (*Ibid.* vol. I, p. 62). It is this very discovery, which he made in Milan when

(17) *De civ. Dei* XVIII, 44: 'Propter quod utroque numero significari convenientissime potuit, quorum unum per Jonam prophetam, alterum per septuaginta interpretum prophetiam, tamen unus atque idem Spiritus dixit.'

(18) *Conf.* III, 5; CSEL 33, 50, 59: 'Et ecce video rem non compertam superbis neque nudatam pueris, sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam et velatam mysteriis.'

Ambrose opened up the Scriptures to him *remoto mystico velamine*, by which he learned to understand that saying, "the letter killeth but the Spirit quickeneth!"

Any explanation other than the mystic-allegorical one was indeed impossible if both the Hebrew text and the Septuagint were to be held as inspired and infallible. But the question of how it was then possible to maintain the absolute trustworthiness of the history related in the Bible has not been answered by Augustine. In the explanation of Jonah 3, 4 he himself follows the Hebrew text as the correct reading of what the prophet said. But then is not the reading of the Greek text erroneous whatever there may be of deeper meaning behind the mistake? The historical problem, the historian's question, "how it really happened," was even more pressing in the Gospels, which are certainly not amenable to an allegorical typological interpretation such as is always possible with the Old Testament. So it is that the great apologetic attempt at a harmony of the Gospels in *De consensu evangelistarum* is among the most unsatisfactory of what the great Father of the Church wrote. His sparkling intellect here develops into cold acumen seeking artificial pretexts to bring the theory that there should be no contradictions within the Gospels into harmony with the reality of the differences in the transmission of the Gospels. Unable to solve the problem with a clear doctrine of the nature of the Gospel and its historic form, he has to try to harmonise each particular case where a contradiction or mistake appears to exist. So he discovers that the cleansing of the temple, which according to the Synoptists takes place at the end of Jesus' ministry, and according to John, at the beginning, took place several times (*De consensu evan.* II, 67; CSEL 43, 231, 9ff.). The explanation of Mark's statement about the crucifixion of Jesus at the third hour (Mark 15:25), whereas according to John 19, 14 Pilate delivered the Lord for crucifixion at the sixth hour, is that the Jews had asked for the crucifixion at the third hour. "Mark judged most truly that the Lord's murderer was rather the tongue of the Jews than the hand of the soldiers" ⁽¹⁹⁾ (*Ibid.* vol. VI, p. 199). That is, of course, no explanation of the difference. One example that has been particularly difficult for apologists of all times is Matth. 27:9, where a quotation

(19) *De consensu* III, 13, 42; CSEL ad loc. 327, 2 f: 'Marcus ostendit vérissime iudicans magis fuisse Domini necatricem linguam Judaeorum quam militum manus.'

coming from Zechariah is attributed to Jeremiah. Origen, if we are to trust Rufinus' translation—otherwise the statement would have to stand to the credit of Rufinus alone—indicates that this is an error of the Scriptures (*errorem scripturae*, Migne SG 13, 1709) in his commentary on Matthew *ad loc.* Jerome expresses himself very carefully in the letter to Pammachius which is so important for his attitude to the Bible: "May they then accuse the apostle of a fault because he neither agrees with the Hebrew text nor with the seventy translators, and, what is more than this, because he errs in the name, insofar as he put Jeremiah instead of Zechariah? But far be it to speak thus of a man who accompanied Christ and whose business it was not to chase after words and syllables, but to explain sentences containing doctrine."⁽²⁰⁾ This means by the strict standard of history the Apostle has made a mistake. But one must not charge him with falsehood on this account, because it is not his function to catch words and syllables, but to put forward the doctrine. Augustine in his intricate discussion, comes to the conclusion that it may so have happened that the name Jeremiah instead of Zechariah occurred to the Evangelist, as often happens (*ut animo Matthaei evangelium consribentis pro Zacharia Hieremias occurreret, ut fieri solet*). Later he would certainly have corrected these mistakes, had he not reflected that the falsity of his memory, aided by the Holy Spirit, would not have occurred unless God will that the text should so read (*nisi cogitaret recordationi suae, quae Sancto Spiritu regebat, non frustra occurrisse aliud pro alio nomen prophetae*). The deeper reason for God's willing it Augustine saw in the fact that at bottom all prophets compose a unity because it is one Spirit that speaks through all, and effects a *mirabilis consensio*. This is the doctrine to be extracted from the confusion (*De Consensu evang.* III, 7, 30; CSEL 53, 305f.). Accordingly what appears to us as a mistake in the presentation of Holy Scripture is effected by the Divine will with a quite definite purpose. "How, then, is the matter to be explained, but by supposing that this has been done in accordance with the *more secret counsel of that providence of God* by which the minds of the evangelists were governed"⁽²¹⁾ (*Ibid.* VI, p. 191).

(20) Ep. 57, Migne SL 22, 568 ff: 'Accusent apostolum falsitatis, quod nec cum Hebraico nec cum Septuaginta congruat translatoribus: et quod his malus est, erret in nomine, pro Zacharia quippe, Jeremiam posuit. Sed absit hoc de pedissequo Christi dicere: cui curae fuit non verba et syllabas aucupari sed sententias dogmatum ponere.'

(21) CSEL ad loc. 305, 9 ff: 'Quid ergo intellegendum est, nisi hoc actum esse secretiore consilio providentiae Dei, qua mentes evangelistarum sunt gubernatae.'

V.

These examples may suffice. In conclusion we attempt to answer the question as to what we may learn from Augustine's attempt to prove the inerrancy of Holy Scripture apologetically. This essay shows that it is impossible to apply to the Bible that hellenistic, pagan-Jewish understanding of inspiration which makes the human mind an impersonal instrument. As a matter of fact the great Church Father has not at all been able to prove that absence of mistakes or contradictions which he had maintained. Either he must be satisfied with clumsy and unconvincing attempts at harmonising narratives that defy harmonisation, as in the case of the cleansing of the Temple or the time of the crucifixion, or he must have recourse to "the reality veiled in mysteries" (*res velata mysteriis*) in Holy Scripture or to a "more secret counsel of the providence of God," which has guided the biblical writers and allowed them to give the Divine revelation in a disguise which to our human reason must appear as error or contradiction. The question arises why he makes this step as *ultima ratio* only. Is it possible to understand the doctrine of the Word of God as given by the Holy Spirit otherwise than by the belief in the "reality veiled in mysteries"? Is it not necessary right from the beginning to make the step which Augustine makes at the end when he, driven into a corner by the facts of the Biblical text, does not know a way out? Does it not belong to "the more secret counsel of the providence of God" that the Gospel is given us, not in the form of one book without contradiction, but rather in four gospels which often are at variance and defy harmonisation; indeed, just as in the Old Testament almost every important narrative is given in several accounts? None of the Church Fathers, not even Augustine, the greatest among them, was able to grasp the idea that the Word of God is always hidden, "veiled in mysteries," and not merely only where our reason fails to grasp it. The heritage of ancient philosophy and indeed the religious background from which the Fathers came were too strong. Only eleven centuries after Augustine, when the Christian West had passed through all possible forms of a synthesis of ancient philosophy and Christian faith, a member of a monastic order which was called after St. Augustine was able to express the truth of the "veiled reality" in words which contain a new doctrine of the Word of God: "God's wisdom is hidden under the appearance of foolishness, and

His truth under the appearance of a lie. . . . The Word of God, as often as it comes to us, comes in a form contrary to our mind which thinks very highly of its own ability to see truth.”⁽²²⁾

We may ask whether at least traces of this insight are found with the Fathers of the fourth century. With Augustine one may find it, without being troubled by the problems of apologetics, where in his personal experience he finds what he calls “the reality veiled in mysteries” (e.g., in the passage quoted earlier from *Conf.* III, 5). Among the theologians of that age there is, as far as we can see, only one man who had at least hinted at the possibility of solving the problem of Holy Scripture with its divine and human side in still another way without applying the pagan theory of a divine and, therefore, obviously most perfect book to the Holy Scriptures of the Church. This man was Chrysostom, the great doctor of the Eastern Church. He has done that in his teaching of the *synkatabasis*, the *condescensio* of God. “Behold the condescension of the Divine Scripture, see what words it uses on account of our weakness,” he says commenting on Gen. 2:21 (in Gen. Hom. XV—Migne SG 53, col. 121). In a similar way he says commenting on Gen. 3:8 (Migne *loc. cit.* col. 135) of Holy Scripture that it shows such great humility (*tapeinotes, humilitas*) of speech. In Hom. 15 on John (Migne SG 59, col. 97f.) he explains the passage Hosea 12, 11⁽²³⁾ in this way: “This means I have condescended and I did not appear as that which I was.” *Neque id, quod eram, apparui.* In such sentences a new doctrine of Holy Scripture begins to become manifest which, to use Luther’s terms, is no longer a *theologia gloriae*, but a *theologia crucis*: a doctrine in which the gracious condescension of God in Holy Scripture becomes a parallel to the Incarnation of the eternal Word, because He who is the Word, is content and Lord of the Bible.

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(22) *Roemerbriefvorlesung zu Roem.* 12, 1ff. WA 56, 446, 31ff. ‘*Dei sapientia abscondita est sub specie stultie et veritas sub forma mendacii . . . verbum Dei, quoties venit, venit in specie contraria menti nostrae, que sibi vera sapere videtur.*’

(23) *LXX*: ‘en chersin propheton homolothen’; *Vulg.*, v. 10; ‘in manibus prophetarum adsimilatus sum’; *A.V.* v. 10: ‘I . . . used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets.’

A Seventeenth Century Classic

Jeremy Taylor's "The Liberty of Prophesying"

Among the truly great books of a century noted for great books is Jeremy Taylor's "The Liberty of Prophesying," a classic of the accommodationists, to be ranked, indeed, with Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*—a work the importance of which cannot very well be over-estimated. "While Hale and Chillingworth only dealt incidentally with the practical question of toleration," says Dr. G. P. Gooch, "the Chrysostom of the English Church raised his voice in an express plea for religious comprehension." A noble contribution it was to the subject. Admittedly, in some quarters, at least, it has been over-eulogised. Disparaged, too, by Samuel Rutherford, it yet commanded the admiration of Milton and S. T. Coleridge. "On the whole," says Bishop Dowden, "there is perhaps no work in our Anglican theological literature more sure to arrest and hold attention, more stimulating, more provocative of thought than the 'Liberty of Prophesying'; as there is certainly no more brilliant manifestation of Taylor's intellectual powers."

Impossible it is to dissent from Dr. Parr's opinion—corroborated by Heber—that while Englishmen revere Barrow and admire Hooker they love Jeremy Taylor. His learning was vast, encyclopædic, indeed, Heber, his biographer, furnishing us with more than nine hundred authors whom he quotes, including the Greek and Latin classic writers then accessible, medieval casuists, Church historians, Greek and Latin Fathers, Schoolmen, continental theologians and controversialists of many ages, not to mention his own contemporaries. Nevertheless, we cannot honestly say Jeremy Taylor is in the first rank as a thinker. "The Liberty of Prophesying," declares Saintsbury, "is an argument for toleration which would have been more effective if the author had been a closer reasoner, and perhaps also if he had not been on the losing side at the time." His fertility of imagination and command of language, however, never left him at a loss for arguments.

What was the object of the "Liberty of Prophesying"? Was it, as Willmott says, to plead the cause of the persecuted Church of England? Or was it, as Hallam apparently hints—following Wood—a stratagem to introduce dissension into the Presbyterian ranks? Surely, if we are to believe Taylor himself, it was wider and more spiritual.

"We by this time are come to that pass, we think we love not God except we hate our brother; and we have not the virtue of religion, unless we persecute all religions but our own; for luke-warmness is so odious to God and man, that we, proceeding furiously upon these mistakes, by supposing we preserve the body, we destroy the soul of religion; or by being zealous for faith, or which is all one, for that which we mistake for faith, we are cold in charity, and so lose the reward of both.

All these errors and mischiefs must be discovered and cured, and that is the purpose of this discourse."

It is, perhaps, somewhat difficult to appreciate fully Taylor's work—as Bramhall's—because of our haunting sense of the apparent inconsistency of thought and deed, of teaching and practice. How could the persecutor of Down and Connor be the exponent of liberty of preaching or interpretation or, as he puts it, prophesying? "He found a great difference," says Bagwell, "between philosophising as a scholar and governing as a bishop," the truth being that in post-Restoration Ireland toleration was a doctrine that could hardly be practised. Circumstances were not congenial. Besides, the charge of inconsistency suggests itself more obviously to the modern mind than to that of the seventeenth century—toleration not then being the virtue it now is.

As an accommodationist Taylor reminds us, perhaps, most strongly of Baxter, the resemblance, indeed, being altogether remarkable. Both, be it recalled, were preachers, controversialists, theologians, casuists and devotional writers. Both, too, were outside party grooves. Again, both left pleas for a wider tolerance of theological views, in each case, indeed, being suspected of doctrinal laxity. Both, also, were charged with inconsistency. On the other hand, the differences are patent. Taylor, trained at Oxford and Cambridge, the protege of Laud, the companion of Juxon and Sheldon, was, strangely enough, the author of the "Liberty of Prophesying," an unlooked-for emanation from such an environment. Baxter, too, self-taught, brought up with an unhappy experience of Episcopacy, could yet rise above his prejudices to dream the dreams of Ussher. More than passing strange is it, accordingly, that Taylor and Baxter do not appear to have had any connection, and scarcely ever refer to one another—and that despite the fact they were arguing along similar lines of accommodation thought.

And now we turn to give some account of the "Liberty of Prophesying," another of the great text-books of the accommodationists. Its date is 1647—not, of course, a product of the Irish period at all.

Taylor's style is generally stated to be unequalled for wealth of illustration, exuberant fullness of thought, grandeur of diction—inclining, perhaps, to floridness. In this work, however, it is otherwise—the style is clear, simple and unadorned, at times, indeed, a little dry with, too, an absence of the far-famed Taylorian pomp of imagery.

The introduction to the "Liberty" gives us the author's first principle—that differences in religious opinion are inevitable, an inevitability, however, which should not issue in the hostility of parties.

"Few men in the meantime considered, that so long as men had such variety of principles, such several constitutions, educations, tempers, and distempers, hopes, interests, and weaknesses, degrees of light, and degrees of understanding, it was impossible all should be of one mind, and what is impossible to be done is not necessary it should be done; and therefore, although variety of opinions was impossible to be cured (and they who attempted it did like him who claps his shoulder to the ground to stop an earthquake), yet the inconveniences arising from it might possibly be cured, not by uniting their beliefs—that was to be despised of—but by curing that which caused these mischiefs, and accidental inconveniences of their disagreeings."

"But men are now-a-days, and indeed always have been, since the expiration of the first blessed ages of Christianity, so in love with their own fancies and opinions, as to think faith and all Christendom is concerned in their support and maintenance; and whoever is not so fond and does not handle them like themselves, it grows up to a quarrel, which because it is in *materia theologiae* is made a quarrel in religion, and God is entitled to it; and then if you are once thought an enemy of God, it is our duty to persecute you even to death, we do God good service in it."

The cause of mischief and disunion, Taylor argues, does not really lie in diversity of thought—that being inevitable—but in want of charity and breadth of mind. "All these mischiefs," runs a famous passage, "proceed not from this, that all men are not of one mind, for that is neither necessary nor possible, but that every opinion is made an article of faith, every article is a ground of a quarrel, every quarrel makes a faction, every faction is zealous, and all zeal pretends for God, and whatsoever is for God cannot be too much."

And now, in order to track down the origin of "errors and mischiefs" Taylor makes an enquiry into the "nature of faith."

"First, then, it is of great concernment to know the nature and integrity of Faith: for there begins our first and great mistake. For faith, although it be of great excellency, yet when it is taken for a habit intellectual, it hath so little room and so narrow a capacity, that it cannot lodge thousands of those opinions which pretend to be of her family."

Faith, indeed, is not an "intellectual habit" at all. Rather is it a simple personal acceptance of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Now, naturally, if such a proposition were accepted, a strong foundation for accommodation would be provided, so many causes of division being at once removed—which, of course, suits Taylor's argument admirably and meets his end.

"So that although we must neither deny nor doubt of any thing, which we know our great Master hath taught us; yet salvation is in special, and by name, annexed to the belief of those articles only, which have in them the endearments of our services, or the support of our confidence, or the satisfaction of our hopes, such as are—Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, forgiveness of sins by his blood, resurrection of the dead, and life eternal; because these propositions qualify Christ for our Saviour and our Lawgiver, the one to engage our services, the other to endear them; for so much is necessary as will make us to be his servants, and his disciples; and what can be required more? This only: salvation is promised to the explicit belief of those articles, and therefore those only are necessary, and those are sufficient."

To the proposition that everything deducible from these articles must also necessarily be believed our author has his reply—

"It is true, if he sees the deduction and coherence of the parts; but it is not certain that every man shall be able to deduce whatsoever is either immediately, or certainly deducible from these premises; and then, since salvation is promised to the explicit belief of these, I see not how any man can justify the making the way to heaven narrower than Jesus Christ hath made it, it being already so narrow, that there are few that find it."

Further, when Taylor looks for a summary of the truths necessary for salvation, he finds it in the Apostles' Creed. Such a creed, if adequate in the early church, he says, did not cease to be so in his own day.

"And therefore they are no argument sufficient that the first ages of the church, which certainly were the best, did much recede from that which I showed to be the sense of the Scripture and the practice of the apostles; they all contented themselves with the apostles' creed as the rule of the faith."

Deductions, of course, can be made from the Creed—these, however, are not to be raised to the status of articles of faith. In other words, the right of the Church to add "credenda" is denied.

"And, indeed, if the church, by declaring an article, can make that to be necessary which before was not necessary, I do not see how it can stand with the charity of the church so to do (especially after so long experience she hath had, that all men will not believe every such decision or explication) for by so doing, she makes the narrow way to heaven narrower, and chalks out one path more to the devil than he had before, and yet the way was broad enough when it was at the narrowest."

This principle, far-reaching in its effects, was one of the most important of all for the accommodationist thinkers. Time and again have we not seen "particularisms" to rank as the foes of every scheme of comprehension? Linked to this broad outlook, too, was Taylor's (later) comprehensive idea of the Church—which, for him, was the body of all who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of the world, those going beyond this being the true authors of schism and heresy.

As regards church polity, our author, of course, believes in Episcopacy. His "Episcopacy Asserted," published in 1642, was worked out on the usual orthodox Anglican lines—Christ instituted a church committed to his apostles with power of transmission to successors; the difference of the twelve and the seventy accounted for the difference of the bishops and presbyters; the episcopate was distinct from the presbyterate because the presbyterate was a step to it, promotion was by new ordination, presbyters never joined in laying hands upon those who were consecrated to the higher office. Bishops had a power distinct from and superior to that of Presbyters—as of ordination, confirmation and jurisdiction. They are schismatics who separate from their bishop. Into the validity of these arguments, of course, we need not enter. There is no trace, obviously, of the comprehensiveness of the later "Liberty of Prophesying." In the five years, however, which separated the works, a marked evolution of thought took place. Whatever his own private convictions, Taylor did not, in the interest of accommodation, continue to press them. Episcopacy for him became the "bene esse" of the Church, not its "esse"—a position, surely, which had to be admitted if any form of comprehension was to be tried at all.

Continuing the argument of the "Liberty," our author deals with the "nature of heresy"—a most important chapter, indeed. In brief, Taylor's position is that heresy does not consist in speculative idiosyncrasy but in a wicked opinion, an ungodly doctrine—and so it was, he says, in Scripture times.

"For heresy is not an error of the understanding, but an error of the will. And this is clearly insinuated in Scripture, in the style whereof faith and a good life are made one duty, and vice is called opposite to faith, and heresy opposed to holiness and sanctity."

"Now every man that errs, though in a matter of consequence, so long as the foundation is entire, cannot be suspected justly guilty of a crime to give his error a formality of heresy; for we see many a good man miserably deceived (as we shall make it

appear afterwards); and he that is the best amongst men, certainly hath so much humility to think he may be easily deceived; and twenty to one but he is, in something or other; yet if his error be not voluntary, and part of an ill life, then because he lives a good life, he is a good man, and therefore no heretic: no man is an heretic against his will."

"A wicked person in his error becomes heretic, when the good man in the same error shall have all the rewards of faith."

"But, however, I find no opinions in Scripture called damnable but what are impious in their effect upon the life, or directly destructive of the faith or the body of Christianity."

This view of heresy—as that which strikes at the foundation of Christianity embodied in the Apostles' Creed—was certainly sufficiently wide and comprehensive to commend itself to the accommodationists, being, indeed, one of their main principles.

Perhaps, however, Taylor has his greatest interest for us when he proceeds to examine the alleged special sources of authority in religious opinion. Of these Scripture is one. Yet, says our author, while the truth that maketh "wise unto salvation" is assuredly plain there is no infallible declaration of theological opinion in Scripture.

"Since Holy Scripture is the repository of divine truths, and the great rule of faith, to which all sets of Christians do appeal for probation of their several opinions; and since all agree in the articles of the creed, as things clearly and plainly set down, and as containing all that which is of simple and prime necessity; and since, on the other side, there are in Scripture many other mysteries, and matters of question upon which there is a veil; since there are so many copies, with infinite varieties of reading; since a various interpunction, a parenthesis, a letter, an accent, may much alter the sense; since some places have divers literal senses, many have spiritual, mystical, and allegorical meanings; since there are so many tropes, metonymies, ironies, hyperboles, properties, and improprieties of language, whose understanding depends upon such circumstances that it is almost impossible to know its proper interpretation, now that the knowledge of such circumstances and particular stories is irrevocably lost; since there are some mysteries which, at the best advantage of expression, are not easy to be apprehended, and whose explication, by reason of our imperfections, must needs be dark, sometimes weak, sometimes unintelligible; and lastly, since those ordinary means of expounding Scripture, as searching the originals, conference of places, parity of reason, and analogy of faith, are all dubious, uncertain, and very fallible—he that is the wisest, and by consequence the likeliest to expound truest in all probability of reason, will be very far from confidence; because every one of these, and many more, are like so many degrees of improbability and uncertainty, all depressing our certainty of finding out truth in such mysteries, and amidst so many difficulties. And, therefore, a wise man that considers this, would not willingly be prescribed to by others; and, therefore, if he also be a just man, he will not impose upon others; for it is best every man should be left in that liberty from which no man can justly take him, unless he

could secure him from error: so that here also there is a necessity to conserve the liberty of prophesying and interpreting Scripture; a necessity derived from the consideration of the difficulty of Scripture in questions controverted, and the uncertainty of any internal medium of interpretation."

Tradition is the next of the authorities mentioned by Taylor. Here again, however, infallibility is not to be found.

"Since, beside the no necessity of traditions, there being abundantly enough in Scripture, there are many things called traditions by the fathers, which they themselves either proved by no authors, or by apocryphal and spurious, and heretical—the matter of tradition will, in very much, be so uncertain, so false, so suspicious, so contradictory, so improbable, so unproved, that if a question be contest, and be offered to be proved only by tradition, it will be very hard to impose such a proposition to the belief of all men, with any imperiousness or resolved determination; but it will be necessary men should preserve the liberty of believing and prophesying, and not part with it, upon a worse merchandise and exchange than Esau made for his birth-right."

Nor do general councils fare much better. They have never been declared by the Church to be infallible; they have contradicted one another; they have often, indeed, been corrupt; and finally have, on occasion, undoubtedly erred.

As regards papal infallibility it is not necessary here to speak. Taylor, of course, combats the theory along the usual lines.

"But I am too long in this impertinency. If I were bound to call any man master upon earth, and to believe him upon his own affirmative and authority, I would, of all men, least follow him that pretends he is infallible and cannot prove it. For that he cannot prove it, makes me as uncertain as ever; and that he pretends to infallibility makes him careless of using such means which will morally secure those wise persons, who, knowing their own aptness to be deceived, use what endeavours they can to secure themselves from error, and so become the better and more probable guides."

Nor can the Fathers be accepted as the authority. Innumerable are the topics on which they disagreed, the errors, too, into which they fell.

But all this, it may be objected, is purely negative and destructive. Where, then, is the authority to be found? The answer is—in reason. In saying this, of course, Taylor was no Rationalist in the modern sense. Never did it occur to him to place reason in opposition to religion, only to authority; not to revelation, only to quasi-authoritative interpretations of revealed law. In the conscientious exercise of private judgment is the best security. Of course, reason may err without, however, being culpable, what is plain to one understanding being obscure to another. All the same, it is not required of us not to be in error, only that we endeavour to avoid it.

"No error, neither for itself, nor its consequents, is to be charged as criminal upon a pious person, since no simple error is a sin, nor does condemn us before the throne of God, since he is so pitiful to our crimes, that he pardons many de *toto et integro*, in all makes abatement for the violence of temptation, and the surprisal and invasion of our faculties, and, therefore, much less will demand of us an account for our weaknesses."

For the most part, the remainder of the "Liberty" need not detain us—it has reference to toleration rather than to accommodation, a toleration remarkable, be it noted, as ranging all the way from Anabaptism to Roman Catholicism. The last section, however, is certainly apposite to our purpose—"That particular Men may communicate with Churches of different Persuasions, and how far they may do it," from which we gather that Taylor would have liked to see intercommunion between different Churches on a wider scale.

"As for the duty of particular men in the question of communicating with churches of different persuasions, it is to be regulated according to the laws of those churches; for if they require no impiety or any thing unlawful as the condition of their communion, then they communicate with them as they are servants of Christ, as disciples of his doctrine, and subjects to his laws; and the particular distinguishing doctrine of his sect hath no influence or communication with him who, from another sect, is willing to communicate with all the servants of their common Lord: for since no church of one name is infallible, a wise man may have either the misfortune, or a reason, to believe of every one in particular that she errs in some article or other; either he cannot communicate with any, or else he may communicate with all that do not make a sin or the profession of an error to be the condition of their communion. And therefore, as every particular church is bound to tolerate disagreeing persons, in the senses and for the reasons above explicated, so every particular person is bound to tolerate her; that is, not to refuse her communion when he may have it upon innocent conditions."

This was a suggestive admission. After all, Episcopacy—of which Taylor was a loyal advocate—was an accidental of the Church and not an essential. Taylor, we see, never argued for the uniting of religious bodies on the basis of a minimum-belief—all he proposed was that those who subscribed to the Apostles' Creed should leave each other alone in other matters, whether of faith or discipline, instead of enforcing what was bound to be in the end an irreligious compliance.

Such, then, is the gist of the famous "Liberty of Prophesying." Its indebtedness to Chillingworth is obvious, especially in the plea that the issues which separated Christians, at any rate Protestants, were not matters of faith but of speculation—as also in the plea that the

Apostles' Creed was the best just because it was the simplest. No exaggeration is it to claim that the debt of the accommodationists to Taylor was incalculable, he being so largely responsible for providing the philosophic basis of the movement. Stillingfleet, at a later date, could write in the spirit of Hales, Chillingworth and Taylor himself. In his case, however, the battle was largely with the claim of divine right—Taylor's, on the other hand, was with theological particularisms. Only by getting rid of both could the vision of accommodation materialise. The same ideal it was—seen, however, from different angles.

D. S. HOPKIRK.

Melbourne.

Book Reviews

THE FAITH OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

By Gustaf Aulen. Translated by Eric H. Wahlstrom and
G. Everett Arden (Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia), 1948,
pp. 457; \$5.

Dr. Aulen, well known as the author of *Christus Victor* (originally a course of lectures on the Atonement, given in 1930), was for 20 years Professor of Systematic Theology at Lund, and for 20 years Bishop of Strängnäs, Sweden, till his retirement in 1952. This book contains his general statement of Christian Doctrine. In its arrangement it is a model of clarity; it consists of 51 sections, arranged in 9 chapters; each section is preceded by a summary, usually under 3 or 4 headings—these summaries mostly drawn up, no doubt, for his Doctrine Lectures at Lund—and the discussions which follow are concise and orderly. The translation is adequately good, and it is always plainly intelligible.

The reader is advised to look up first such points as the Divine Love, Original Sin ("The Solidarity of Sin"), Justification, the Church, the Eucharist, or what he will, and to leave till later the first chapter (pp. 3-114) on "Faith and Theology." But plainly it is with this alone, and not with particular points of doctrine, that a reviewer can usefully deal.

In his Preface, Dr. Aulen explains that the Swedish title is *Den allmäneliga kristna tron*, and that *allmänelig* (for all men) is the word used in the phrase "the Holy Catholic Church" in the Creed; hence the title *The Faith of the Christian Church* is a correct rendering. Then he says that he regards Systematic Theology as a scientific study of "the Christian Faith as a living reality." "To explain the significance of this faith, to make clear what essentially belongs to it, and to bring to light, wholly and completely, its own characteristic viewpoints, is the task of systematic theology. Thus theology must reveal what the eyes of faith see."

Therefore, he says, Theology must be ecumenical in its aim; not the private theology of an individual theologian, nor yet a statement of the doctrine of a particular confession; for, "No doctrine can be accepted as truly Christian simply on the basis of its confessional relations, for instance its relations to Luther, Calvin, or Thomas Aquinas," however much it may need to profit by the insights of all these.

He goes on to say that in the 19th and early 20th centuries there was a rivalry between a fundamentalist Biblicalism and Liberal-modernism. The former of these was either "scholastic" or pietistic in character, or both at once, and tended to narrow-mindedness; the latter interpreted the Faith from the standpoint of idealistic philosophy and a somewhat vague humanism, and tended to a disintegrating misinterpretation of the Christian Faith. Hence neither of the two did justice to the Faith of the Christian Church. But since then there has come, first a fresh insight into the meaning and motif of the Reformation, and second, a new and realistic approach to the Biblical message; and here is the starting-point of this book.

The claim to express a point of view that is not merely individual nor merely confessional is of course implicitly made by innumerable books dealing with particular problems of theology; but I know of no other writer who has made this claim for an outline of Christian Doctrine, covering the whole field. It is indeed a great and a bold claim; for Dr. Aulen is saying that there can exist, even now, a truly ecumenical theology, grounded on a common understanding among

Christians of the faith by which they live. Given this, the reunion of Christendom is already in principle possible; for what is required for reunion is that in the unity of a common Faith all Christians should be able to worship together and live together.

Does Dr. Aulen's claim stand? It can be said, By what right does this book claim to be ecumenical? There are divisions between Christians, some of them not serious, but others that go deep, such as the division between Fundamentalists and those who accept modern critical methods; and here the two sides often cannot easily find a common ground of discourse, or of co-operation. Deeper still is the division between the Roman Catholics and the rest of us; and here, a truly ecumenical theology could only emerge as the result of a real insight, on the Roman side, into the meaning and motif of the Reformation, and some real understanding, on the other side, of the amazing width and depth of the Catholic tradition of belief, worship, and way of life.

But perhaps the strength of this book lies in its very limitation—in the fact that after all it is a personal statement of belief, and that it does spring out of the confessional tradition of Swedish Lutheranism. That is the ground on which it stands; and from that it reaches out to try to express the inner content of that common faith which, in the measure that they are true Christians, all Christians believe, and in which they are saved. Dr. Aulen makes in this book a splendid and courageous affirmation. It is an important book, the book of a great Christian.

St. Michael's House, Crafers, S.A.

GABRIEL HEBERT, S.S.M.

HERMENEUTIK.

By Ernst Fuchs (R. Müllerschön Verlag, Bad Cannstatt), 1954, pp. 271.

Ernst Fuchs is not well known outside Germany. He had not advanced very far in his academic career as a theological teacher when in 1933 his open stand against the Nazi regime forced him to relinquish his position of a "Privatdozent" in the University of Bonn. For many years he did the work of a parish minister in his native Swabia; at present, he is a professor in the University of Tübingen.

Theologically, Fuchs belongs to the school of Bultmann, and like his teacher, he owes much to the philosopher Martin Heidegger. Like Bultmann, Fuchs is a "controversial" figure on the theological scene of present-day Germany where Bultmann's plea for "demythologising" the New Testament has become the subject of a heated controversy. In Bultmann's school, the term "myth" is used in an unusually extensive fashion, covering everything that traditional theological speech describes as "supernatural." This school has accepted the closed universe of the modern scientist. There is nothing "outside" this universe, not even God. The result is that the traditional Christian terms such as "history," "advent," "eschatology" undergo a subtle but radical transformation in the use of that school. They are taken out of the context of the traditional "Heilsgeschichte" and are applied to the individual's encounter with God in the "kerygma" here and now. This encounter actually constitutes "the eschatological situation," according to this novel terminology, since in the act of faith all our questions are silenced in "eschatological joy."

Karl Barth has criticised this terminology, which Fuchs has accepted with the rest of Bultmann's school, for forcing us into "an anthropological strait-jacket" (*Dogmatik*, III, 2, 535). We may then disagree with Fuchs, but we shall find him, like Bultmann, a pro-

vocative and stimulating thinker who engages us in a discussion which is well worthwhile pursuing, for behind his arguments is a sincere desire to involve the reader in an existential encounter with God through the medium of Jesus Christ.

The book itself falls into three parts. The first part includes a very useful introduction to the contribution of other thinkers to the subject of hermeneutics in so far as their work has some bearing on the relation of text and interpretation in general. The remainder of the work (following the example of Schleiermacher) is divided into "general hermeneutics" and "applied hermeneutics." In the former, the author justifies the undertaking of an interpretation of the human condition in theologically neutral terms (das *Selbstverständnis!*) as a necessary, preliminary step to the interpretation of the kerygma or message of the New Testament itself. In the latter, he discusses the hermeneutic problems of the New Testament more specifically. (As a N.T. scholar Fuchs does not concern himself with the O.T.)

The book contains many fine and sensitive observations on the subject of interpretation. An example is the author's treatment of Phl. 2:6-11 and his insistence on the need for cultivating a "mood" in the interpreter which will respond to the truth that is in the text. Fuchs also appears to have a deeper appreciation of the function of "myth" when he sees in it not only the opposite to "logos," but accepts it as a constant reminder of the inability of conceptualised speech to say everything.

Dunedin.

H. H. REX.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE.

By Bernard Ramm (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids), 1954, pp. 368; \$4.00.

It has become almost a commonplace of contemporary theological writing that the traditional view of the infallibility of Scripture is now outmoded. It is also supposed that the conflict between Christianity and science is over, and has contributed largely to the emergence of the modern view. The violent rearguard action still being fought by the extreme fundamentalist wing against evolution and other satanic evils is considered to be possible only because of the invincible ignorance and wilful perversity of those who still hold fiat creation in 4,000 B.C. as essential to the purity of the faith. For this reason many persons will think that there is no need for a serious scholar to revive the old issues. But Ramm has a strong conviction that the evangelical position needs to be rescued from the muddle into which it has been brought and sets out a position which is loyal to traditional orthodoxy and at the same time respectful of science. For this reason he has to fight on more than one front. He rejects both liberal and neo-orthodox reconciliations which soften the doctrine of biblical infallibility. He rejects also the mass of fundamentalist apologetic usually associated with that doctrine. Indeed, one of the sad things in his book is the exposure of great quantities of nonsense that have been spilled forth in misguided attempts to defend evangelicalism. Ramm believes that a constructive reconciliation of Science and Scripture was reached by great evangelicals of the nineteenth century, but complains that "a narrow evangelical Biblicalism . . . buried the noble tradition" (p. 9). He contrasts the broad attempt to construct a biblical philosophy of science as a counter to purely naturalistic science with the baser method of guerilla attacks on the weaker points in scientific theory. He attributes the failure of evangelicals to make any impression on science in this century to the predominance of this latter method.

The book is in two parts. The first three chapters, amounting to one-third of the book, are taken up with analysis of the fundamental problems involved. He makes the point very firmly that the conflict of rival philosophies is deeper than the incidental matters of the interpretation of certain texts. Before he attempts any reconciliation of, say, Genesis and Geology, he examines the nature of Science and the nature of Scripture. The excellence of this section, places the author's thesis in a strong position. He argues that the language of the Bible is popular, phenomenal and conditioned by the culture in which it was produced; it does not teach any theories of a scientific nature. Specially valuable is Ramm's long examination of the Biblical view of Nature; from which he suggests a Christian philosophy of nature.

The remainder of the book is a detailed examination of the matters in which science and scripture meet, viz., Astronomy, Geology, Biology and Anthropology. It is impossible to do justice to the wealth of material and the thoroughness of its treatment in this section. All the traditional "scientific difficulties" are dealt with. He shows up the complete chaos that reigns on these questions in the fundamentalist camp. For instance, in discussing Genesis 1 he reviews nine different classes of "reconciliation," and shows them all to be untenable. In the chapter on Biology he pays tribute to the constructive thinking of Roman Catholic apologists. He argues that a belief in theistic evolution is not inconsistent with full loyalty to the Scriptures, although his own position is that of "progressive creation," i.e., a combination of acts of direct creation with divinely supervised development. The author believes that the acutest problems for a biblical faith are met with in Anthropology. He reviews the evidence relating to the origin and antiquity of man, and shows the futility of the usual objections of the conservatives, to scientific conclusions.

Dr. Ramm writes as a philosopher. We may excuse then the occasional error in matters theological (e.g., "The curse fell upon the man, the woman and the serpent," p. 334) or scientific (e.g., "the so-called weight of the electron and its electrical charge (are) identical, p. 129). There is an occasional crudity of language (e.g., "God creating flatly and sovereignly *outside* of Nature now turns the task of creation over to the Holy Spirit who is *inside* Nature," p. 116); and his definition of "entropy" on p. 275 is quite meaningless. His discussion of dysteleology is also weak. But these are insignificant blemishes on a work that may be unhesitatingly recommended as informed, thorough and, above all, sane.

Melbourne.

FRANCIS I. ANDERSEN.

CHRIST AND THE CAESARS. HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

By Ethelbert Stauffer (S.C.M. Press), 1955, pp. 293; 18/-.

I take pleasure to introduce to the readers of this Review a book by my former colleague, E. Stauffer, Professor of New Testament at Erlangen and at the same time lecturer in numismatics. Written in a brilliant style which has been preserved in the masterly translation by K. and R. G. Smith, the book contains 16 "sketches," the form of which reminds the reader of the best essays of French literature. They are *parerga* of the work done by the author in his two fields of research. These essays, independent from one another, are knit together by the common theme "Christ and the Caesars" which has become so important to the witnesses and victims of modern Caesarism. They are full of detailed historical information without the burden of a learned apparatus and should make interesting reading to anyone who wants to get a deeper understanding of the first 500 years of

Christianity. To the student of the New Testament the essays VIII ("The Story of the Tribute Money," a thought-provoking explanation of Mark 12:13-17) and XI ("Domitian and John," an illuminating sketch of the political background of Revelation) may be of special importance. The great essay XIV on "The Last Struggle" is perhaps one of the best presentations of the eventful Third century which we possess. Here, as in all essays, which cover the time from Augustus to the Christian emperors, the author shows an amazing ability of drawing vivid pictures of past history. Thus the book is a valuable supplement to text books of Church History and deserves to be recommended to the students in our country who are so remote from the scenes of early Church History. However, this thought-provoking book should also find many readers among Christian laymen, especially historians and politicians.

It would not be fair to criticise details of these sketches which necessarily are fragmentary in many respects. A few questions, however, must be asked. As to numismatics: Why did the author in discussing Constantine not take into account the masterly attempt by the late Hans Lietzmann to describe the development of Constantine's church politics from the development of Constantine's coins ("Der Glaube Konstantins," a paper read in 1937 at the Berlin Academy of Sciences). The main objection against the book is the author's attitude towards Caesarism as such. His predilection for Caesar himself prevents him from realising that after all the assassination of Caesar, a crime though it was, delayed for at least two centuries the introduction of Asiatic despotism into the Roman Empire, notwithstanding such figures like Domitian who was so severely criticised by Trajanus. The astonishing amount of practical freedom which Christianity enjoyed during the first centuries in spite of the persecutions is due to the remnant of human freedom which Augustus had secured for the new empire. The author has even sympathy with Cleopatra and applies to her verses which Rilke in a poem on Michelangelo wrote on the great *man* in history. Paul and John would have used a much simpler term to describe that corrupt oriental woman. Constantine is glorified in the manner of Eusebius under the title *Imperium Gratiae*. The relatives whom he had assassinated would probably have had their own ideas of the "reign of grace." "The guilt of Constantine was perhaps greater than that of any other ruler" (p. 271). But perhaps the "Uebermensch" must not be measured by Christian standards. "The first Christian emperor was no saint, but a great statesman who was aware of the inherent tragedy of politics with its involvement in sin and violence." Does not this imply that a criminal is not a criminal if, and as long as, he happens to be a successful statesman? Is this ethics still alive in spite of all that has happened during the last decade? "This very awareness made the grace of God in the Cross of Christ the *conditio sine qua non* of his political life, which played an increasing part, subjectively as well as objectively, in his own career." This means to read religious convictions of a modern statesman like Bismarck into the soul of an ancient man for whom the "cross" was not more than the swastica for Hitler, a symbol of victory and the expression of the belief to be elected by Providence for a great political work. The author's sympathy with the more cultured, or even Christian, Caesars has its counterpart in his understanding of Christ as Imperator. This idea, though based on Revelation, is only one side of the early Church's understanding of Christ. K. Holl is criticised (p. 205) for holding the view that the victory of Christianity over the ancient religions is to be ascribed to the fact that the Gospel is the message of a merciful God.

Its victory should rather be ascribed to the gospel as being the message of Incarnation. Does the author not realise that according to the early Fathers God became man *propter immensam suam dilectionem*? He is wrong when he states that the gospel of mercy was first understood by Augustine and Luther. Among the excellent illustrations with which the publishers have embellished the book there is a most impressive one, "The Face of the Third Century," taken from a pagan sarcophagus and expressing the terrible fear of a generation which saw the first downfall of the Roman Empire. There is another "Face of the Third Century," to be found on contemporary Christian sarcophagi, faces of men and women which express a supernatural peace. And it should not be forgotten that the first representations of Christ in Christian art do not show the Pantocrator of the Byzantine era, but rather Christ at the Eucharist and the Good Shepherd who carries home his lost sheep.

These criticisms are not meant to question the value of this book. Their intention is only to show that the problems which it raises are perhaps greater than those which it solves. It calls our attention to the deepest question of our age, that of a new merciless Caesarism.

Adelaide.

H. SASSE.

SHORTER NOTICES.

Sanctorum Communio, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Chr. Kaiser Verlag, D.M. 8.50). This book, a new edition of the writer's academical thesis, written originally in 1930, does not make easy reading, especially in its earlier parts which assume on the side of the reader a fair knowledge of philosophy in general and of social philosophy and sociology in particular. But in its later parts one is generously awarded for one's efforts by finding a great number of illuminating remarks on the structure and character of the sociological phenomenon, which we call the Church. It is the aim of Bonhoeffer to point out that the Christian notion of personality is that of personality in social relationship, from which angle he very strongly criticises the individualistic atomism of the modern conception of the community and draws the outline of a picture of the scriptural "Communion of saints." He deals not only with the problem of the Church as such, but also with many other related theological questions, such as the relationship between Christ and the Church and the Holy Spirit and the Church, the nature of the Church's service, message, sacraments, office and pastoral care. Indeed, there is hardly any vital subject in this connection which is not discussed and given its proper place in the structure of the whole. The main criticism of the book is that it attempts to cover too much ground in too small a compass. Constantly the reader desires that striking statements were dealt with more explicitly. However, remembering that this is the academical thesis of a young man of only 21 years, one is amazed with such theological ability and ripe learning, and is grateful to find food for thought in such quantity and quality.

J. B. Groenewegen.

Conscience in the New Testament, by C. A. Pierce (S.C.M. 8/6). Using a chapter in Stobaeus as a starting-point, this study ranges over thirteen centuries of Greek literature in which to discover the content of the popular idea expressed by *syneidesis*. The author includes all the relevant examples he has been able to find, and these are clearly and concisely set out in an analytical index. The treatment, interestingly presented, leads to the conclusion that conscience is "the painful reaction of man's nature, as morally responsible, against infringements of its created limits. . . ." But too much relevant material has been

missed for the onesided emphasis on "painful reaction" to pass without question. For instance, examples from Lysias, Xenophon (besides those cited) and others have been overlooked; the Apostolic Fathers, whose writings are at least as relevant as any of four centuries later, pass unnoticed except for a solitary reference in a footnote; and not all of Stobaeus' citations are considered. There is frequent disregard for contexts, resulting sometimes in serious misrepresentation; a glaring instance is the unfair criticism of Hastings Rashdall on pp. 115-6. A generalisation on p. 26 (there is a less sweeping statement on p. 56) of what "is simply not Greek" is "simply not" correct.

Esther, Song of Songs, Lamentations, by G. A. F. Knight (S.C.M. 7/6). This is Professor Knight's second volume in the "Torch" Series, and he has compressed much useful information into its pages. In his Introductions, he writes enthusiastically to show why the Church has, despite adverse criticism, retained these books as part of Holy Writ, especially the first two. The story of Esther, which he compares with Lloyd Douglas's religious novel, *The Robe*, comes to us from the childhood period of Israel's growth and education, and "adds to our knowledge of the mighty acts of God for the salvation of the world in and through his chosen instrument and people." The Song of Songs by taking a fundamental theme of human experience, "is witnessing in its own beautiful way to the greatest scandal of all time, the incarnation of love itself in human flesh." The Book of Lamentations brings home to us "the privilege that is ours indeed, now that we too are called God's firstborn sons in Christ, in the summons laid upon us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service." The Introductions cover much ground and contain some fine passages; a survey of varying interpretations is given for the Song. Although they must need be concise, the commentaries are helpful. But considerable caution must be exercised in accepting the author's application of typology, a current fashion that easily becomes incongruous.

C. Stewart Petrie.

Early Christianity: The Purpose of Acts and other Papers, by Burton Scott Easton (S.P.C.K. 12/6). These essays are preceded by a biographical sketch of the author who died in 1950. The author was a scholar, diligent, earnest and careful, and these articles bear the hallmarks of patient and painstaking study. The major contribution is entitled "The Purpose of Acts," and it can be commended for its refreshing and stimulating discussion of familiar problems. The great merit is its independent discussion of the actual text.

The Hope of the Gospel, by James Sutherland Thomson (S.C.M. 10/6). This is another popularising work, pleasantly and agreeably written, based on wide and discursive reading. There is a wealth of quotations from contemporary writers, both theological and secular, and familiar ground is mapped again. The author (Dean of the Faculty of Divinity in McGill University) has said nothing profound but he has said it well.

Religious or Christian? by A. Hallesby (I.V.F. 6/-). Hallesby is concerned to demonstrate what the Christian faith is, and what it is not. He is particularly concerned with the dangers of syncretistic diminution and confusion: and in simple evangelical fashion he speaks of the "Obedience of Faith," "The Offence of the Cross" and kindred themes. This little book should serve well its chosen purpose of clarification.

S. Barton Babbage.

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